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TR4-4246

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10/20/86

Dear Ray,

In an effort to be helpful I have let other things go to finish the Bastard. In an effort to be helpful I shall be frank about it. Do not do it as it now is. I'l tell you why I believe this. As I told you when I had just begun it, I think now is the time for specicialized studies of particular aspects of the case. If your monograph does not add materially to what is now generally available, what does it accomplish? It adds too little and much less than it can. Thereby what can be important and worthwhile falls short of that when it need not.

The form is a handicap it may not survive and can waste both the money it will cost and the audience it might otherwise attract. It is too untidy, to black, with too much underlining where the desireable effect of emphasis is lost. It is an imposition on buyers to expect them to pay for incomplete pages and interlined corrections and notations in the margin.

I believe you are taken with the length of statement of hypothesis. I think it is much too long and accomplishes little purpose, that it will bore and bewilder the reader, unnecessarily. This is fine for your own thinking but is not the kind of thing the average reader wants. You can state what it says (and I think some of what it says may be questionable) much more briefly and interestingly) and use the space saved for those things that are lacking.

There is material available that you haven't used and I think you should. As I told you, you are welcome to use mine, and you can use it also to lead you to what I had to leave out. Examples of this are the tracing of the Governor's clothes and what those who handled it and the stretcher said, the tracing of the possible sources of the ammo, discontinued the moment reloaded ammo was found to be generally available. It you should, as I doubt, heed my advice, I'll give this more thought and I'm confident will be able to make additional such suggestions. I'm rushing this because I've just been called to see the doctor and have little time. I do want to get it done before I get busy again.

Your material on the opinions of the corners is worth much more space and attention that you gave it. This is not footnote material. It is an original contribution and should be an important part of the text. You can expand it with the testimony of the autopsy doctors, who, if their opinion is worth anything, said they found this is what happened in the President's body. It is also the official explanation given the Washington Post when my book appeared and they consulted the former staff of the Commission.

You build up to saying the bullet is planted. Because you do this, your reader will expect an explanation of why anyone would plant the bullet, from either evidence or your opinion. You can offer reasonable explanations of suggestions and should.

If you persist in proceeding with this content and this form, you run the serious risk of doing harm, of alienating those who buy it and are disappointed for various reasons and instead of telling their friends this is an exciting worthwhile thing they should buy will say it is an untidy incomplete job they shouldn't. This will cost you in money an appreciable part of a decent presentation, neatly typed for offset and reduced to a 6x9 page. I'm confident my artist will do all the calculations and planning

for you without charge. You can then work your illustrations in neatly and attractively and can, as a matter of fact, include more without real additional cost. Examples are more pictures, direct photocopies of the testimony, etc.

You can make an attractive and worthwhile pamphlet of this. I really wish you would. I have been frank, knowing candor is often unwelcome, because it is the price and measure of friendship. Please ask those others who have read it what they believe of what I have here said, especially Bill and Maggie.

In the remote event you decide to heed my advice, my additional suggestion would be that you type with a pica machine and reduce the size to that of elite or a trifle smaller, with space and a half between the lines and two spaces between paragraphs, decent margins, more white space atop each subdivision, etc., to overcome some of those liabilities I encountered because of space, cost and ignorance.

You should expand the Edgewood stuff, which is important, how the bullets was regarded so haphazardly in Washington, as I told you it was, more on who was at the Naval Hospital, which is also available, more on the presence or lack of it on the FBI agents, which I can also give you and you may be able to get elsewhere, how close the FBI agents were to what was going on with respect to this bullet, more of its history as alleged inside the President's body and how it is incredible, more on the front-wound part of the autopsy, etc., which help tell the entire story of this bullet and in one place.

Perhaps I'll have time to expand rather than just rushing through to get this done when I get home. If I do not, the best of luck with whatever you do, and if there is any way in which I can help, let me know.

Sincerely,

Got home late but though of this while driving. I haven't changed my mind, Ray. I believe what I have said is valid. I also believe that as time goes on and the subject opens up more, publishers will be looking for what you may end up with. Why not do a thorough job that might be publishable and will mark you as having done an important thing. Picking the bullet was a wise choice. It is that essential to the case of the government. Of course, you may not be able to. I believe you do not want to. In that case the least I'd strongly urge upon you is that you retype it cleanly, working in your references and diminishing the emphasis to what is so much more important that it is worth emphasizing. On the other hand, if you take my advice, let me tell you the offset photographer can work right from the 26 volumes knowing the size of the space to be filled by whatever you use for illustration. Thus you have no extra photographic expense. Your offset photographer can also eliminate the screen. My pictures are better than the original, a pleasant surprise, because my photographer is more conscientious that those employed by the Commission.